

# MEDICARE and You

1991 Edition



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WHAT  
IS  
"MEDICARE"  
?



It's a broad program of federal health insurance for people age 65 or over, and for many disabled people, established by Congress in 1965 via Social Security amendments.

WHY  
IS IT  
IMPORTANT  
?

Because it helps these people pay hospital and doctor's bills, thus ensuring the best possible health care in their old age or when they are disabled and can't work.



This medicare program is in

# 2 PARTS:

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## A. BASIC HOSPITAL INSURANCE



See pages  
4 to 7

This coverage is  
available to nearly  
**EVERYONE**  
65 or over and to many  
disabled people  
under 65.



## B. VOLUNTARY MEDICAL INSURANCE



See pages  
8 to 11

You  
**TAKE** it  
if you  
**WANT** it!



# A. BASIC HOSPITAL INSURANCE

**IT'S IMPORTANT TO REMEMBER** that Medicare only covers care that is "reasonable and necessary" for the diagnosis or treatment of an illness or injury.

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## **MEDICARE DOES NOT COVER**

"custodial" care (help in walking, dressing, bathing, etc.) or care that is not considered "reasonable and necessary."

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**WHO** helps Medicare **DECIDE** if care is reasonable and necessary?

A Peer Revue Organization (PRO) for each hospital -- or a Utilization Review Committee for each skilled nursing facility -- approves or disapproves each patient's stay. In addition, PROs are responsible for:

- reviewing hospital decisions or reconsidering PRO decisions made about hospital stays
  - investigating individual patient complaints.
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## **A NOTE ABOUT PROSPECTIVE PAYMENT**

Since 1983, Medicare has been using the Prospective Payment System to pay most hospitals.

- Under this system, the hospital is paid a fixed amount for each patient's primary diagnosis during a hospital stay -- whether it's more or less than what the hospital would actually charge.
- Prospective Payment does not decide the length or quality of the patient's care or affect the patient's insurance protection.

# What it **COVERS** and **PAYS**

For those who **MEET ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS**, hospital insurance can help pay for:

## **HOSPITAL CARE** up to **90 DAYS PER BENEFIT PERIOD.\***

There is no limit to the number of 90-day benefit periods you can have.

- **1st 60 DAYS** – insurance pays all covered costs except for first \$628.\*\*
- **Next 30 DAYS** – insurance pays all covered costs beyond \$157\*\* a day.
- **PLUS 60 ADDITIONAL DAYS RESERVE** – insurance pays all covered costs beyond \$314\*\* a day. (Once used, the 60 reserve hospital days cannot be replaced.)

There is a lifetime limit of 190 days on payments for treatment in mental hospitals.

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## **SKILLED NURSING** or rehabilitative care in a Skilled Nursing Facility (certified by Medicare) -- **UP TO 100 DAYS PER BENEFIT PERIOD** after a hospital stay of at least 3 days, if you enter the skilled nursing facility within a limited period (generally 30 days) after leaving the hospital, provided that you need and receive daily skilled nursing care or rehabilitation services.

- **1st 20 DAYS** – insurance pays all covered costs
  - **Next 80 DAYS** – insurance pays all covered costs beyond \$78.50\*\* a day.
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## **HOME HEALTH CARE** -- by nurses, therapists and home health aides from an approved home health agency.

If special conditions are met (check with a home health agency) insurance pays full approved cost of visiting nurses, physical therapists and other health workers (but not doctors).

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## **HOSPICE CARE** -- for terminally ill beneficiaries.

Medicare pays covered costs for 210 days of hospice care – more if the patient is recertified as terminally ill. The patient is responsible for part of the costs of outpatient drugs and respite care.

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\* A "BENEFIT PERIOD" begins when you enter the hospital and ends when you have been out of the hospital and have not received skilled care in another facility for 60 consecutive days. You are held responsible for the first \$628\*\* only once in any benefit period, regardless of the number of times you enter and leave a hospital.

\*\*through 12/31/91

## A. BASIC HOSPITAL INSURANCE (cont.)

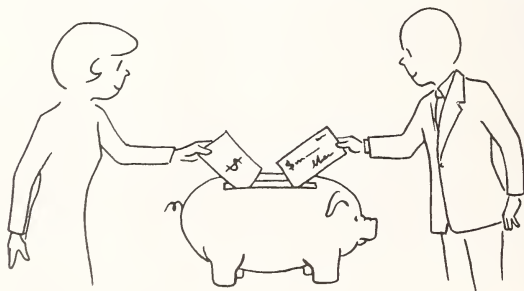
### HOW MUCH DOES IT COST?

You and your employer each contribute to a special "Hospital Insurance Trust Fund" to pay for this program. Your employer will deduct your share and match it. For example



YEARS	WAGES SUBJECT to TAXATION up to	% DEDUCTION for hospital insurance	MAXIMUM YEARLY DEDUCTION for hospital insurance
1990	\$51,300	1.45%	\$743.85
1991	\$125,000	1.45%	\$1,812.50

Wages subject to taxation will increase automatically as the general level of wages rises across the country.



# HOW DO I QUALIFY?

## PROTECTION STARTS AUTOMATICALLY

**IF--** you are receiving benefit checks from Social Security or railroad retirement at 65, or after you have been entitled to Social Security disability checks for 2 years.



**YOU'LL GET INFORMATION BY MAIL A FEW MONTHS BEFORE YOUR 65th BIRTHDAY OR BEFORE THE 2 YEARS ARE UP, IF YOU ARE DISABLED.**

BUT, you should apply for Medicare at the local Social Security office or Railroad Retirement Board 2-3 months before your 65th birthday IF:

- you will not be receiving Social Security or railroad retirement payments at 65, or
- you plan to continue working past 65, or
- you're eligible for Medicare based on federal employment.

ALSO, see your Social Security office about Medicare if you are:

- disabled, under 65 and getting railroad disability annuities, or
- disabled, and possibly eligible for Medicare based on federal employment, or
- needing dialysis or a transplant for chronic kidney disease.

NOTE: If you're 65 or older and covered by an employer group health insurance plan either through your or your spouse's current job, the plan is often your primary insurance payor. In this case, Medicare will act as your supplementary insurance payor. If you think this provision may apply to you, contact your personnel office or your local Social Security office.

# B. VOLUNTARY MEDICAL INSURANCE

## What it **COVERS** and **PAYS**

Except for the first \$100 each year -- this insurance pays 80% of Medicare's approved charge for the following services:

### PHYSICIANS' AND SURGEONS' SERVICES



received at home, in a hospital, or elsewhere. Also, some limited services of chiropractors are covered.

### HOME HEALTH SERVICES



-- unlimited medically necessary visits under an approved plan. Insurance pays approved cost of covered services with no deductible. (Certain conditions must be met -- check with a home health agency.)

### OUTPATIENT HOSPITAL SERVICES



including X-rays and tests, your physicians' and hospital staff physicians' services, medical supplies and services.

### OTHER MEDICAL AND HEALTH SERVICES



including tests, surgical dressings, rental and purchase of medical equipment, certain colostomy care supplies, outpatient maintenance dialysis treatments, outpatient physical therapy and speech pathology services, etc.

(For details ask for a copy of "The Medicare Handbook" at any Social Security office.)

# MEDICAL CLAIM ASSIGNMENT

under voluntary medical insurance. Either you or your health-care provider may submit claims to Medicare, depending on **ASSIGNMENT**-- which is a method of payment. For example, assuming you have met the \$100 annual deductible:

## IF YOUR PHYSICIAN ACCEPTS ASSIGNMENT

-- he or she agrees not to charge more than the Medicare-approved fee for a particular service. Then, when your physician submits a claim, Medicare pays him or her 80% of the approved fee (you pay the other 20% -- called coinsurance).



Office Visit	
Doctor's fee .....	\$25
Doctor takes assignment for ..	\$20
80% Medicare Coverage .....	\$16
You pay coinsurance .....	\$4

## IF YOUR PHYSICIAN DOES NOT ACCEPT ASSIGNMENT

-- he or she can bill you for the full charge, even if it's higher than Medicare's approved fee. However, your physician (or supplier or other provider of health-care services) is required to submit your claim for you.

In this case, Medicare pays you 80% of the approved charge, but you must pay the other 20% plus any amount beyond the approved fee.



Fee paid .....	\$25
80% of the \$20 allowed by Medicare .....	\$16
Your cost .....	\$9

## IMPORTANT!

MEDICARE-PARTICIPATING PHYSICIANS accept assignment on all Medicare claims. Physicians who don't participate may accept assignment at their discretion.

To find out if a physician accepts assignment on Medicare claims, call his or her office, or contact your local Social Security office or Medicare carrier.

**NOTE:** if you already have private hospital or medical insurance, **DON'T CANCEL** it until you've talked with someone who understands insurance and your financial situation.

## B. VOLUNTARY MEDICAL INSURANCE (cont.)

WHO PAYS  
FOR THIS  
MEDICAL  
INSURANCE  
?

IF YOU TAKE IT  
AT YOUR FIRST OPPORTUNITY:

You pay **\$29.90\*** per month, and the federal government pays even more out of general funds. The money is put into a special "Supplementary Medical Insurance Trust Fund."

Your **\$29.90\*** per month will be DEDUCTED from your Social Security monthly check (or from your railroad retirement or civil service retirement check).



The **\$29.90\*** deduction starts the month your coverage starts. If you do not receive monthly checks from any of the above sources, you make your monthly payment directly to Medicare.

\*through 12/31/91

## HOW AND WHEN DO I ENROLL?



If you are receiving Social Security benefits or retirement benefits under the railroad retirement system, you will be automatically covered by medical insurance -- **UNLESS YOU SAY YOU DON'T WANT IT.**

At the same time you'll become entitled to hospital insurance.

YOU WILL GET INFORMATION IN THE MAIL A FEW MONTHS BEFORE YOU BECOME ENTITLED TO HOSPITAL INSURANCE -- WITH AN OPPORTUNITY TO DECLINE MEDICAL INSURANCE.

Everyone else who is eligible for medical insurance must apply for it at a Social Security or railroad retirement office.



I'll take it.



### IF YOU DO NOT ENROLL AT YOUR FIRST OPPORTUNITY

you can sign up during a general enrollment period -- January 1 through March 31 each year. Protection begins the following July, and your monthly premium will be 10% higher than the basic premium for each 12-month period you could have had medical insurance but were not enrolled.



What is included  
in "HOSPITAL  
BENEFITS"?

Except for the \$628\* deductible, insurance covers the cost of room and board in a semi-private room (2 to 4 beds), ordinary nursing services (not private duty), services of hospital technicians; and cost of the drugs, supplies and most other items of service usually provided by hospitals for patient care.

Do all  
"Nursing Homes"  
qualify under  
this program?

No! Just skilled nursing facilities approved for Medicare, which furnish professionally supervised medical services (such as round-the-clock nursing service with a full-time registered nurse, and a physician available for emergencies).

What kind of  
"HOME CARE"  
is covered?

It includes part-time skilled nursing care, speech and physical therapy, etc., under a plan worked out and periodically reviewed by a physician to meet a patient's needs. If you need any of these services, Medicare may then cover occupational therapy, part-time home health aides, medical supplies and equipment, and medical social services.

Can I join a  
HEALTH  
MAINTENANCE  
ORGANIZATION  
and still receive  
Medicare benefits?

Yes. If you join an HMO (or another qualified health plan), you'll receive services covered by Medicare -- and possibly some services not covered by Medicare. You simply continue to pay your monthly Medicare medical insurance premium (and a small monthly HMO premium in some cases).

\*through 12/31/9

They include practically all the services received in the Outpatient Department of a hospital, such as lab tests and x-rays. You would not stay overnight at the hospital.

What are  
"OUTPATIENT HOSPITAL  
SERVICES"  
?

Yes. You can choose your own physician. And Medicare helps pay for covered care in any hospital participating in the program.

Can you still  
choose your physician  
and hospital?

No, not for either program.

Are any physical  
exams needed to be  
eligible?

In this case, you may be able to get help from your state medical assistance program (Medicaid).

Suppose I can't  
pay my part of  
medical expenses  
?

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## OTHER QUESTIONS ?

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Call or visit your nearest Social Security office -- listed in the phone book under "Social Security Administration,"  
Or ask at your local post office for the address.

# IMPORTANT

## SERVICES NOT COVERED BY EITHER PLAN \*

### 1 CUSTODIAL CARE

- for personal needs
- doesn't require professional skills or training



### 2 Routine PHYSICAL CHECKUPS, HEARING EXAMS, DENTAL CARE



### 3 EYEGLASSES and EYE EXAMS for prescribing, fitting or changing eyeglasses.



### 4 HEARING AIDS



### 5 DENTURES



### 6 ORTHOPEDIC SHOES,

unless they're part of leg braces and included in the orthopedist's charge.



### 7 PRIVATE DUTY NURSES



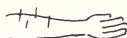
### 8 PERSONAL SERVICES in your hospital or skilled nursing facility room (telephone, TV, etc.)

### 9 NONREPLACEMENT FEES CHARGED FOR THE FIRST 3 PINTS OF BLOOD

or packed red cells each calendar year



### 10 ACUPUNCTURE



## DRUGS

### Under the HOSPITAL PLAN,

drugs are covered if furnished to a patient in a hospital or skilled nursing facility.

### Under the MEDICAL PLAN,

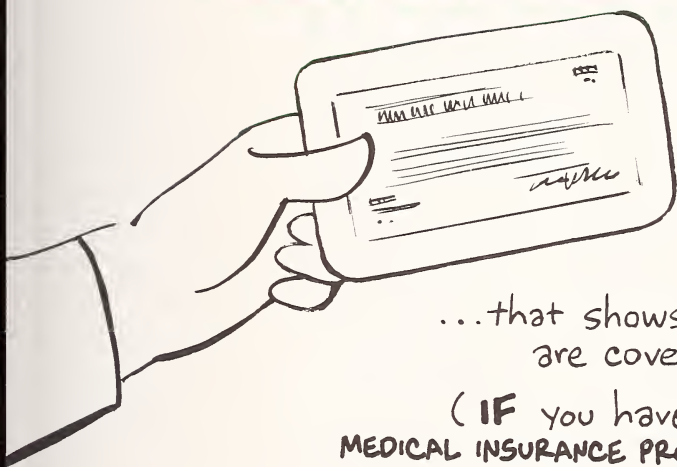
drugs that cannot be self-administered are covered if administered as part of a physician's professional services or as part of outpatient hospital services.



\* Some of these services may be covered if you are enrolled in an HMO.

After you qualify for the hospital insurance program you will receive a

# HEALTH INSURANCE CARD



...that shows you  
are covered.

(IF you have  
MEDICAL INSURANCE PROTECTION,  
the same card will show you  
have this protection.)

## KEEP THIS CARD WITH YOU

and always show it to hospital, skilled  
nursing facility, home health agency, physician  
or other person providing services.

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